

DISCLOSURE DIVISION

☒ **WAIVER REQUEST**
☐ **ANSWER**
☐ **RECONSIDERATION REQUEST**
☒ **UNTIMELY**

DATE: 10/29/2021

DOCKET #: 2021-916

Ashley Wimberley, Director
Disclosure Division



FILER INFORMATION

Name: Mr. Jeffrey A Free
Address: 507 Hunters Run, Bossier City, LA 71111-8171
Office/Position: City Council / District 4 / Bossier
of Disclosures/Amendments Filed with Agency: 13
Years Covered: 2008-2020
Final Report: No

REPORT INFORMATION

Name of Report: Tier 2 Candidate Personal Financial Disclosure covering calendar year 2020
March 20, 2021 election
Report ID: PFD21010384
Original Due Date: 1/27/2021
NOD Received: 2/4/2021
NOD Signed by: Penny Free
PFD/Answer Due Date based on NOD: 2/18/2021
PFD/Answer Filed: 10/5/2021

LATE FEE INFORMATION

Amount of Late Fee: \$2500
Days late from receipt of NOD: 229
Total days late from initial due date: 251
Late Fee Order Received: 6/9/2021
Payment/Waiver Request Due Date: 6/29/2021
Waiver Request Received: 10/5/2021

COMMENTS:

Jeff Free is requesting an Untimely Waiver for the late filing of his 2020 Candidate PFD Statement. Mr. Free stated he did not think he was required to file the Candidate's PFD Statement, since he was the Incumbent - running opposed; And did not have any campaign contributions, bank accounts or loans associated with his campaign. He called the BOE to make sure and spoke with a CF staff member on 2/26/2021. Staff confirmed he was not required to file the CF reports. However, Mr. Free thought that applied to both the CF and PFD reports. He stated he's timely filed all his other PFD's and his 2020 annual filed in May 2021, is the same information that would have appeared on his Candidate's PFD (with the exception of the Election Date/Office Sought). After receiving the LFO, he called again for clarification. He spoke with the Disclosure Director, and then wrote a 2 paragraph letter explaining why he missed the deadline. He mailed his initial waiver request by regular mail on 6/11/2021. When he did not hear back from the BOE, he assumed his request was received, and that no further action was needed on his part. He contacted the BOE once again and learned that his waiver request was never received. Mr. Free apologizes for his misunderstanding of the filing requirements and asks the Ethics Board to waive his fine.

This is Mr. Free's first late filing and late fee assessment.

OTHER LATE FEE INFORMATION

Disclosure Statements:

- Other Outstanding Statements: No
- Other Outstanding Late Fees: No
- Prior Late Fees: No
- Reassessed Late Fees: No

Campaign Finance:

- Outstanding Late Fees: No
- Prior Late Fees: No

Jeff Free

507 Hunters Run
Bossier City, LA 71111
Phone: 318.349.7445

► **Ashley Wimberly, Director**
Disclosure Division

Louisiana Board of Ethics
P.O. Box 4368
Baton Rouge, LA 70821
Phone: 800.842.6630

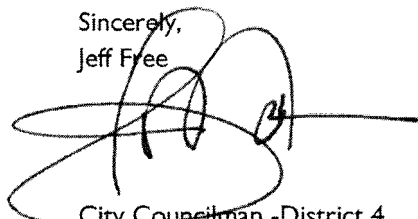
Ms. Wimberly,

As per our conversation, I am writing to request a waiver of the assessed late fee for failing to file my Tier 2 Personal Financial Disclosure Statement (for candidates) for 2020. I am the incumbent for the city council seat of District 4 for the City of Bossier City and ran this year unopposed, as a result I had no campaign contributions, bank accounts or loans associated with running a campaign. Therefore, I did not think I would need to file the candidate's report. But to make sure I called and had a conversation with Michelle in the campaign finance division on February 26th to verify what I thought to be correct, and she confirmed that indeed filing the report was not necessary since I did not take any contributions.

However, I did not realize that it did not apply to the personal financial disclosure (for candidates) as well. I have timely filed an annual Personal Financial Disclosure Statement in each of the previous years, as well as the current year and in a timely manner with the same information which would appear on the "candidate's report" with the exception of the first page listing "office sought, date of election and the incumbent checkbox." I apologize for my misunderstanding; I have never been late or been assessed any penalties for failure to file my annual Financial Disclosure Statement in any of the past years. Therefore, I am asking for a one-time waiver of the \$2,500 late fee.

In addition, after receiving your letter earlier in the year indicating that I was late filing, I called in for clarification and after our conversation I wrote the above two paragraphs to explain why I had missed the deadline and sent the letter on June 11, 2021 and since I did not hear back (until last Friday) I made a bad assumption that the letter was received, and no further action was needed. However, as I understand the letter was never received and at this point, I have no idea which form of delivery I used. I have now attached the Tier 2 Personal Financial Disclosure (For Candidate's) Report along with this letter as an attachment and have emailed directly to you at ashley.wimberly@la.gov. Again, I apologize for my confusion and appreciate your time and patience explaining the entire reporting process.

Sincerely,
Jeff Free



City Councilman - District 4
City of Bossier City
October 05, 2021

ETHICS BOARD REC'D
OCT 11 '21 PM 12:43

Ashley Wimberley

From: Jeff Free <jeff@jefffree.com>
Sent: Friday, October 8, 2021 2:12 PM
To: Ashley Wimberley
Subject: Fw: Tier 2 Personal Financial Disclosure Statement (for candidates) covering 2020
Attachments: Tier 2 Financial Disclosure for candidates - Jeff Free.pdf; Letter requesting fine waiver 061121.pdf

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Please do not click on links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

From: Jeff Free
Sent: Tuesday, October 5, 2021 11:47 AM
To: ashley.wimberly@la.gov <ashley.wimberly@la.gov>
Subject: Tier 2 Personal Financial Disclosure Statement (for candidates) covering 2020

Ms. Wimberly,

Please find attached my 2020 Tier 2 Financial Disclosure Statement (for candidates) and a letter requesting the waiver of the \$2,500 late fee. I truly appreciate you time and patience with me over past several months and apologize for my confusion through it all.

If there is any additional information you would need from me, please don't hesitate to reach back out to me. Thanks again and have a great day. - Jeff

Jeff Free, City Councilman - District 4
City of Bossier City
620 Benton Road
Bossier City, LA 71111
(318) 349-7445 (Cell)
Jeff@JeffFree.com



STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE CIVIL SERVICE
LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS
P. O. BOX 4368
BATON ROUGE, LA 70821
(225) 219-5600
FAX: (225) 381-7271
1-800-842-6630
www.ethics.la.gov

CERTIFIED MAIL

NO. 70200640000017280216

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

February 2, 2021

Jeffrey A Free
507 Hunters Run
Bossier City, LA 71111-8171

RE: CANDIDATE - NOTICE OF DELINQUENCY
Councilman / District 4, City of Bossier City / Bossier

Dear Mr. Free:

Pursuant to La. R.S. 18:1495.7, any person who becomes a candidate for an office (for which the holder of the office is required to file a financial disclosure statement) shall file a financial disclosure statement for the office for which he is a candidate within three business days of the day the candidate files his notice of candidacy for the office.

Your Tier 2 Personal Financial Disclosure statement covering 2020, related to your candidacy in the March 20, 2021 election, was due in this office on or before January 27, 2021. As of this date, the Statement has not been received. **You have 7 business days from the date of receipt of this Notice** to file your personal financial disclosure statement with this Board.

Pursuant to La. R.S. 42:1124.4, failure to file your Statement within the 7 business days, shall subject you to an automatic late filing fee of \$100 per day up to a maximum of \$2,500. Proof of timely filing is determined by the U.S. Postal Service postmark; receipt from the U.S. Postal Service; or receipt from a commercial delivery service.

The form for the Tier 2 Personal Financial Disclosure (Form 416b) statement is available on the Louisiana Board of Ethics website at www.ethics.la.gov. If you have any questions, you may contact me at 225/219-5600 or 800/842-6630.

Sincerely,

Lisa Ford
Program Compliance Officer

SENDER: COMPLETE THIS SECTION

- Complete items 1, 2, and 3.
- Print your name and address on the reverse so that we can return the card to you.
- Attach this card to the back of the mailpiece, or on the front if space permits.

1. Article Addressed to:

Jeffrey A Free
507 Hunters Run
Bossier City, LA 71111-8171



0216

2. /

7020 0640 0000 1728 0216

PS Form 3811, July 2015 PSN 7530-02-000-9053

COMPLETE THIS SECTION ON DELIVERY

A. Signature

Jeffrey A Free ☒ Agent ☐ Addressee

B. Received by (Printed Name) *Jeffrey A Free* C. Date of Delivery *2-5-21*

D. Is delivery address different from item 1? ☐ Yes ☒ No

61:ZM 17.0831

ETHICS BOARD RECD

FEB 03 21 PM 2:19

JA 2020C

3. Service Type

- ☐ Adult Signature
- ☐ Adult Signature Restricted Delivery
- ☒ Certified Mail®
- ☐ Certified Mail Restricted Delivery
- ☐ Collect on Delivery
- ☐ Collect on Delivery Restricted Delivery
- ☐ Restricted Delivery
- ☐ Priority Mail Express®
- ☐ Registered Mail™
- ☐ Registered Mail Restricted Delivery
- ☐ Return Receipt for Merchandise
- ☒ Signature Confirmation™
- ☐ Signature Confirmation Restricted Delivery

Domestic Return Receipt